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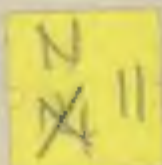
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406



Further Collection of Papers respecting Koweit, the Bagdad Railway, &c.

[30533]

No. 1.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 121.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, September 17, 1907.

PURCHASE of land near Koweit.

(Secret.)

A Conference of Representatives of the India Office, Admiralty, and Foreign Office will meet next week to examine and report on question of possible terminal ports for Bagdad Railway.

Government of India lay great stress on the importance of rendering more effective our support in staying off Turkish aggressions on Sheikh of Koweit's Fao properties and on Bubiyan, since, next to Koweit, Khor Abdulla is only possible harbour in that region, and affords facilities for wharves.

Questions of territorial jurisdiction will have to be considered by the Conference, and it is desirable that they should be furnished with any further observations you may have to make in regard to Sheikh's claims to Warba Island, Fao, Um Kasr, and Bubiyan.

Negotiations regarding acquisition of site at Bunder Shweikh are in advanced stage, but it is also of great importance that we should secure prior rights to all suitable sites for a terminus.

[31909]

No. 2.

Sir N. O'Connor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 124. Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, September 23, 1907.

YOUR telegram No. 121, Secret.

Purchase of land near Koweit.

I presume that you desire my observations mainly on the political aspect of the question, as seen from the Turkish side.

If we acquire construction of the Bagdad-Bassorah section of railway we need not consider Koweit, and while inclined to think that probably Bassorah will eventually be terminus, it may happen otherwise. I do not consider that Sheikh of Koweit has shown satisfactory claim to territorial jurisdiction to any of the places you mention except Bubiyan Island, and even this is meagre, though we have put it forward officially.* Clearly the Sheikh has only private rights at Fao.

I am certainly in favour of acquisition of site for quays, &c., at Koweit or anything that quietly crystallizes our interests there.

* Mr. Wratislaw, His Majesty's late Consul at Bassorah, expressed a diametrically opposite view in regard to the Sheikh's claim to Bubiyan, which he considered to be good.

We must assume, however, that any fresh encroachment on Ottoman territory will not only be greatly resented but possibly drive Sultan to seek assistance from another Power, even if by so doing he has to make concessions in same neighbourhood to that Power.

If we wish to follow lines of least resistance we should let wily Sheikh watch his opportunity to extend his territorial jurisdiction to Um Kasr and other neighbouring districts of most importance from the point of view of Bagdad Railway. This involves his protection, but we have already given Porte to understand that we could not view with indifference an attack on Koweit. It does not, however, meet difficulty as regards immediate future.

[32079]

No. 3.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 25.)

Sir,

India Office, September 25, 1907.

IN reply to your letter dated the 18th September, 1907, as to the acquisition of land near Koweit in view of its possible utilization as the terminus of the Bagdad Railway, I am directed to inclose copy of correspondence received in a letter from the Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department, dated the 5th September, and to say that Mr. Secretary Morley will instruct the Government of India in the sense of the telegram of which a draft is inclosed, on learning that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury are prepared to admit as a charge on British revenues a moiety (2,000*l.*) of the yearly rent of the rectangular plot which it is proposed to acquire at Bunder Shweikh.

I am also to inclose a copy of a letter which has been addressed by this Department to the Admiralty, and to say that Mr. Morley will be prepared to depute a representative to the proposed Conference between the Foreign and India Offices and the Admiralty.

I am, &c.
(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

Inclosure 1 in No. 3.

Mr. Bill to Government of India.

Bushire, August 25, 1907.

IN amplification of this Office telegram dated the 23rd August, 1907, I have the honour to forward herewith, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of the letter received from the Political Agent, Koweit, on the subject of the lease of the foreshore of Bunder Shweikh and its environs.

Inclosure 2 in No. 3.

Major Knox to Mr. Bill.

Koweit, August 21, 1907.

(Confidential.)

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, in duplicate, copies, with translations, of the proposed draft Agreement by Sheikh Mubarak to lease to the British Government the land to the south of Bunder Shweikh and of the draft Agreement by myself accepting the conditions on behalf of the British Government.

2. It is unfortunate that Sheikh Mubarak should hesitate to sign the Agreement in question without receiving a duly authorized acceptance in form from myself, but to press the point too firmly would only excite greater suspicion and might imperil the success of the negotiations.

3. I have been solemnly assured by Sheikh Mubarak that he will affix his signature, witnessed by his son, Sheikh Jabir, to the document, as soon as I am ready to give him a document duly signed by myself accepting the conditions to which he has agreed.

4. It will be impossible for him to plead ignorance of the Agreement, as it has been prepared finally by his own confidential secretary, and in the preliminary stages was

read over letter by letter and discussed most carefully between us. The Arabic draft remains, of course, in my personal custody. I trust that the notes appended by me to the translation, together with the quasi-telegraphic despatch sent by me in haste to you last mail, will show fully the course the negotiations have taken.

5. With regard to the form of the accepting Agreement, I venture to hope that it will be allowed to stand in the main, though verbal alterations here and there can be inserted, as Sheikh Mubarak has not yet been told what form this letter will take. It would, I think, allay a good deal of suspicion if I am authorized, on the part of Government, to give some assurance that it is not the wish of Government to interfere in Koweit except for the laudable, harmless motives mentioned in the accepting Agreement, and that the Government wishes to see the Sheikh of Koweit powerful, independent, and beholden to nobody.

6. I shall make one more effort to obtain in writing from Sheikh Mubarak the assurance made verbally and detailed in paragraph 3 above. If, however, I fail, I would recommend that I may be authorized to accept in the form indicated, and I would urge that it is extremely important that there should be as little delay as possible in what I venture to hope may be the final stage of the negotiations.

7. A more formal acceptance, signed either by the Resident or higher authority, as the wisdom of Government may direct, might follow in due course, if it should be considered advisable.

8. I think I may safely say that, while Sheikh Mubarak hesitates to commit himself, he and his son, Sheikh Jabir, are both delighted at the course events have taken, less, I believe, on account of the actual profit to them over the deal than because they take it to be an indication of a strong policy for the future, and an assurance that the railway from Bagdad to the sea will be in the hands of the English and that the terminus will be at Bunder Shweikh.

9. I am forced, at the moment of closing the mails, to reopen this letter, as the Sheikh's letter in which he admitted in writing to me that the draft Agreement met with his approval introduced conditions foreign to the actual lease, and especially a dangerously ambiguous clause relating to customs. I promptly visited the Sheikh, but found that he would not consent to treating the customs as a separate matter, and his especial fear was that, as soon as we had got the Shweikh lands into our hands, we should say to him: "Yes, you can take customs dues in your town, and we will take them within our limits." I assured him that Government had no intention whatever of taking customs dues, and pointed out to him that the clause, as it stood, would allow him or his successors, in a moment of displeasure, to enhance customs dues to such an extent as to kill trade and render our Concession nugatory.

10. We then agreed to submit to the wisdom of Government the following general principle to be enunciated in the Agreement accepting Sheikh Mubarak's offer to lease, viz., that Government, on their part, agree not to collect customs dues within the boundaries of Koweit, and that Sheikh Mubarak, on his part, binds himself to furnish a customs schedule with a percentage rate based on present-day rates, as taken from his own subjects, to be applicable to all British subjects or British Indian subjects or other subjects of His Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor, and that the rates are not to be increased without the consent of both parties.

11. I am fully conscious of the inconvenience of introducing a customs regulation into the middle of a lease, but to have insisted on its exclusion would have roused Sheikh Mubarak's suspicions to such an extent as would have imperilled the whole course of the negotiations. Of itself, it would appear to me that the fixing of a regular customs rate on British and British Indian subjects is a distinct advantage, for, although the customs rate is higher than it used to be in Koweit, it compares favourably with the old Ottoman rate of 8 per cent. or the Persian rates, and is, on the whole, favourable, and it will be extremely useful that it should not be altered except with our consent.

12. Sheikh Mubarak also implied that he required the letter of acceptance from Government, by which he means a letter signed by myself duly empowered in that behalf, should also follow closely and in detail the Agreement to lease, signed by himself. There appears to be no objection to this course.

13. I am compelled, therefore, with much misgiving and regret, to suggest that I should be empowered to do the best I can in the circumstances and to give to Sheikh Mubarak a letter which should follow closely, *mutatis mutandis*, (1) the Agreement to lease; (2) the form suggested in paragraph 5 above; and (3) the general principle, enunciated in paragraph 10 above and in Sheikh Mubarak's letter, of which I have the honour to inclose herewith a copy and translation in duplicate.

Inclosure 3 in No. 3.

Translation of Sheikh Mubarak's letter, dated 11 Rajab, 1325 H. (August 21, 1907).

FROM Mubarak-us-Sabah, Ruler of Koweit, to the presence of the high-placed Major Knox, Political Agent of the precious Imperial English Government in Koweit (may he endure for ever).

After asking after your dear heart, afterwards, with reference to the paper which comprehends the detailed boundaries in the lands of Shweikh and the lease as mentioned in the paper which I gave to Major Knox and of which a copy is with me, I am accepting everything that is mentioned therein. Then, if the precious Imperial English Government approves in their exalted sight that (Agreement), then I also ask for a paper, following that one in detail from the Government which shall remain in my hand, and also it shall be detailed in the paper given by the Government that my town is to me, and its boundaries likewise, and all my arrangements remain in my hand in the matter of customs, &c., and all my arrangements at the present day to me and to my heirs after me, and in the matter of the Shweikh lands and of the lands which the Government may in the future rent from me, the Government is to be bound in the paper that they will not take customs on anything in all the lands which they may rent or in which they dwell within the limits of Koweit.

As for the customs of Koweit, its arrangements are in my hands and to my heirs after me, and there shall be an arrangement for the customs dues from the subjects of the Government. I mean English merchants and people of India and other than them of the subjects of Government, by agreement between all—I mean me, Sheikh Mubarak, and the Government—we will make a regulation of fees at some settled rate per centum, and we will arrange them now according to my arrangements of the present day, on my subjects, and after it there shall be no increase except by the consent of the two parties, with the supervision of the Government, and for the explanation of my demands I have sent this letter, and the presentation of the circumstances to the Government is upon you, and may you remain safe.

(Seal of Sheikh Mubarak.)

True translation:
(Signed) S. G. Knox, Major,
Political Agent.

Inclosure 4 in No. 3.

Translation of the Draft Agreement, not yet signed, showing progress of the negotiations.

IN the name of God, the Exalted.

This Agreement is from me, Sheikh Mubarak-us-Sabah, Ruler of Koweit, on behalf of myself and on behalf of my heirs, to Major Knox, Political Agent of the precious Imperial English Government at Koweit, on behalf of the English Government.

The reason of writing this paper is that I, Sheikh Mubarak-us-Sabah, Ruler of Koweit, have leased in perpetuity to the English Government the land, of which the boundaries are detailed below, south of Bunder Shweikh.

First.—The boundary of the land on the north-west shall be 7,500 cubits in length in a straight line, and situated in it the coal-house which I, Sheikh Mubarak, have constructed in these days in the aforesaid land, and the straight line shall march, as far as possible, corresponding with the sea line; but, apart from these two conditions, it shall be lawful to the English Government to draw this direct north-western boundary at their choice and pleasure.

And, secondly, the eastern side and the western side shall be each 500 cubits long, and the southern side shall be 7,500 cubits long, and the whole land shall be rectangular; and of this land there shall be to me, Sheikh Mubarak, of it a plot, on the north-western side of which shall be the coal-house aforesaid, the four sides of which shall be each 300 cubits long, the total 1,200 cubits long (apart from the dimensions of the coal-house) (1), and opposite the house—I mean the coal-house—to the north-west shall belong to me, Sheikh Mubarak.

Secondly.—The rent of the land aforesaid shall be counted at 4 rupees per cubit yearly, which shall flow from the day that this paper, duly agreed, signed, and sealed,

shall come into the hands of the two parties, and the rent shall be paid yearly in advance.

Thirdly.—In explanation of the preceding paragraph, the aforesaid lands are embraced by one line the length of which is 16,200 cubits. (Deducting from it the line of 1,200 cubits, apart from the measurements of the house) (2), the remainder is 15,000 cubits, and the rent of the land according to this line amounts to 60,000 rupees, which will be paid to me, Sheikh Mubarak, or to my heirs, in advance yearly, as long as the British Government desires the aforesaid land.

Fourthly.—There is included in the aforesaid rent, without other rent or demand of any kind, the right to all land above ground or under sea, between the two sides, the east and the west, produced in the north-west direction to 3 fathoms of sea water at the time of the lowest low tide (opposite the north-western boundary) (3), and it is lawful for the English Government to build and construct between the aforesaid limits any building of any kind, coal-sheds, harbour works, &c.

And also it is lawful for the aforesaid Government to put down buoys and do all work needful for the ease of the ships from the open sea to the Bunder.

And also it is lawful for the English Government that they should lease the lands in part or in whole for a fixed term of years or in perpetuity to the English subjects or to the subjects of "British India," I mean the people of India, or to the subjects of me, Sheikh Mubarak, I mean the people of Koweit, at their perfect will and pleasure.

Fifthly.—And further, in consideration of the rent detailed, I, Sheikh Mubarak, confirm, on my own behalf and on behalf of my heirs, my former promise that neither I nor my heirs will grant, sell, or lease to a foreign Government—and in this is included the Ottoman Government—or to the subjects of any foreign Government, any of our land within Koweit boundaries or around it without the permission of the precious English Government.

Sixthly.—And also I, Sheikh Mubarak, and my heirs, am bound in this paper that we will give to the English Government the right of pre-emption in sale or lease of the lands detailed below:—

1. The lands which lie adjacent to the lands detailed at a distance of 2,000 cubits in any direction from the nearest boundary of the leased lands, but to my subjects, the people of Koweit, to them shall be a right of pre-emption stronger and prior to that of the English Government in this special land.

2. The entire Island of Shweikh (4) and its surrounding foreshore.

3. All the lands and the foreshore in the direction of Ras Kathama to a distance of 2 sea miles, I mean 8,000 cubits in any direction from Ras Kathama; if the Government should have any desire in that place, I mean Kathama, then it will be on lease separate from the lands of Shweikh, at a rent (5) that shall please me, and there shall be to me a house near the house of the Government, should the Government desire (the land), and the house which shall be to me shall be a square, each side 300 cubits, the total 1,200 cubits; and to my subjects also land (which is not opposed to (adjoins) the desire of Government) (6), and if it should be necessary I will leave to the Government a road to the sea within my limits, the breadth of which shall not be less than 10 cubits.

Seventhly.—In explanation of the preceding paragraph, that it may not be concealed, whenever any soever may come and desire to buy or to take on lease the lands detailed in the sixth paragraph, either in part or the whole, every time before that I, Sheikh Mubarak, or my heirs, accept the offer of the buyer or of the lessee (7), it behooves and is incumbent on me, Sheikh Mubarak, or my heirs, that we should inform the Agent of the English Government in Koweit, or the Consul-General of the precious English Government in Bushire, and we will give to the aforesaid friend a perfect opportunity, not less than three months, that he may consult higher authority and decide whether the English Government wishes to buy or take on lease the aforesaid lands or no.

Eighthly.—If the opinion of the English Government is fixed on the purchase or lease of the lands sought for (demanded) in accordance with the offer and conditions of the purchaser or lessee, the offer of the English Government will be accepted without talk or further demand (8), and the demanded lands will be sold or leased to the aforesaid English Government on these conditions (9), and I, Sheikh Mubarak, have accepted this rent especially from the precious Imperial English Government, and as for others than it, I would not accept from among all the Powers, though they give me more than this rent, I will not allow them to possess authority in my dominions, and as for the precious English Government, I am grateful to it and its generosity is upon me (and as long as I experience their kindness, and after me my sons, then I am as I have mentioned in this

paper), and I will not consent that a Government other than them of the Governments shall interfere, though they will give me more than this rent, and I hope, please God, that this graciousness to me from the precious Imperial English Government will endure to me and to my heirs after me, and (I hope for) the permanence of their care and kindness.

Notes by Political Agent.

(¹) *I.e.*, we are not to deduct the dimensions of the coal-house, say, 100 cubits in circumference, and give the Sheikh 1,100 cubits. It is to be a clear 1,200 cubits (north-west side 300 cubits), in which the coal-house is to be placed somewhere, preferably at Sheikh Mubarak's option.

(²) Coal-house and compound.

(³) The object of the insertion of these words is to show that our boundary follows the 3-fathom line, and is not a direct line drawn between the 3-fathom points at the extremities of the east and west sides produced. A sketch showing the waving 3-fathom line was given by me to Sheikh Mubarak in the course of these negotiations.

(⁴) There are existing fishing rights here granted by a previous Sheikh to a section of the "Awazin."

(⁵) The ambiguity here will be noticed between the two 5's, but the meaning is fairly clear. Sheikh Mubarak will not sell, but only lease his rights in Kathama. This destroys value of the ready acceptance of an offer of sale, but, to avoid suspicion and discussion, I was compelled to let it stand.

(⁶) Part of another of Sheikh Mubarak's interpolations. It seems harmless, but obscure. A better Arabic scholar than myself may understand exactly what is meant, but I do not understand how land can "adjoin" or "not oppose" a desire, nor exactly what is meant by the "desire of the British Government." The explanation given to me is "any land that the British Government do not want."

(⁷) Would-be lessee. Arabic word means "wishing to hire."

(⁸) *Viz.*, conditions on which the would-be buyer or lessee was willing to take the land.

The words in italics and between brackets seemed to me impossible to accept, as they would make the lease a lease on sufferance. These words were twice inserted by Sheikh Mubarak, but in the afternoon of the 19th August he eventually consented to their omission. In the same afternoon he told me that he objected to the signing of the Agreement, but that he would inclose the draft copied out fairly by his own secretary, with a covering letter in which he would say that he approved the draft and would exchange it for a letter of acceptance signed by me as soon as I was fully authorized to accept. There seemed to be no reasonable objection to this course, so I agreed.

The draft, duly copied out, with the objectionable words omitted, was handed by the Sheikh's Secretary Abdul Aziz-bin-Salim-bin-Badar to my Moola Abdulla, who brought it to me on the morning of the 20th August. There was, however, no covering letter, and I am endeavouring to obtain one.

A slight addition was made to sixthly (2), "only the fishing-nets are to me, Sheikh Mubarak." These fish-nets or weirs are, from their nature, confined to the broad shallow flats to the east, north, and north-west of the island. Should it be used for a quarantine station, it would be necessary to buy out the fishermen, which would probably be done cheaply enough. Otherwise, from the point of view of harbour works, the fishing-nets do not obstruct, and might well be let alone.

Inclosure 5 in No. 3.

Translation of proposed Draft Acceptance of Sheikh Mubarak's Agreement to lease Bunder Shweikh Foreshore.

IN the name of God, the Exalted.

This Agreement is from me (Major Knox), Political Agent of the precious Imperial English Government in Koweit, on behalf of the precious Imperial English Government, to Sheikh Mubarak-us-Sabah, Ruler of Koweit.

And afterwards the reason of writing this paper is that I (Major Knox), Political

Agent of the precious Imperial English Government at Koweit, on behalf of the precious Imperial English Government, and by permission from it granted for this affair specially, there has come between my hands from Mubarak-us-Sabah, Ruler of Koweit, a lease of the lands to the south of Sheikh Bunder, dated the day of 1825 H., corresponding to the day of in the year 1907 A.D., and I (Major Knox), on the part of the precious Imperial English Government, have accepted all the conditions detailed in the aforesaid lease; and, regarding what Sheikh Mubarak has written in the close of that lease that he hopes for the favourable notice of the Government and its kindness on him and his heirs after him, the precious Imperial English Government has honoured me with the permission that I may inform Sheikh Mubarak, on behalf of the precious Imperial Government, that the Government does not wish to interfere in the affairs of Koweit except for the profit of its (Koweit) people and the increase of trade and knowledge and friendship between the English Government and the people of Koweit, and, as regards Sheikh Mubarak-us-Sabah and his heirs after him, (the Government) does not desire to see in Koweit a Ruler other than them ever, and the perpetual desire of the Government is that it should not see the Sheikh of Koweit other than strong, independent, and not beholden to any one whatever, and that the friendship and agreement between the Government and the Sheikhs of Koweit may be perpetual.

Inclosure 6 in No. 3.

Draft of proposed Telegram to the Government of India.

(Secret.)

YOUR telegram of the 27th August and two telegrams of the 8th September: Koweit.

Treasury having agreed to bear a moiety (2,000L) of annual rent, Agreement with Sheikh for lease rectangular plot at Bunder Shweikh for yearly rent of 60,000 rupees may be at once concluded, as in clauses 1 to 5 of draft inclosed in Knox's letter dated the 21st August.

Proposal to acquire further sites is being more fully investigated here in communication with Foreign Office and Admiralty, and questions of territorial jurisdiction—for example, in the case of Warba Island—appear to be involved. For clause 6 of the Agreement a clause should therefore, if possible, be substituted, reserving to His Majesty's Government the right of pre-emption or priority of lease in regard to any further sites which are or may be within the jurisdiction of the Sheikh of Koweit. Here also the reservation of enclaves may be admitted if inevitable. Your views as to customs, slaves, and independence are approved by His Majesty's Government. The passage in the last lines of Knox's draft acceptance of Agreement should be abbreviated so as to read "the desire of the Government is that the friendship and agreement between the Government and the Sheikhs of Koweit may be perpetual."

Inclosure 7 in No. 3.

India Office to Admiralty.

(Very Confidential.)

Sir,

India Office, September 30, 1907.

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to inclose, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, a copy of correspondence with the Foreign Office on the subject of the acquisition of land near Koweit with a view to its possible utilization as the terminus of the Bagdad Railway.

It will be seen that a suggestion is made in the Foreign Office letter of the 16th September, 1907, that a Conference should be held of Representatives of the Foreign Office, the Admiralty, and the India Office, to consider at an early date the acquisition of further sites in addition to that at Bunder Shweikh. I am directed to inquire if the Lords Commissioners concur in this suggestion, and, if so, whether they will be so good as to nominate a representative. It would be convenient if the meeting of the Conference could be held as early as possible in the week beginning the 23rd September, at a time and place to be settled in due course.

I am, &c.

(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL

Inclosure 8 in No. 3.

Admiralty to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Admiralty, September 24, 1907.

IN reply to your Confidential letter of the 20th instant, respecting the question of the acquisition of land near Koweit, in connection with the Bagdad Railway, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, for the information of the Secretary of State for India in Council, that they concur in the proposal that a Conference of representatives of the Foreign Office, India Office, and Admiralty should be held to consider this question, and that Captain H. G. King-Hall, C.B., D.S.O., R.N., accompanied by Captain T. H. Tizard, C.B., F.R.S., R.N., and Captain R. C. Temple, R.M.A., will attend on behalf of this Department.

I am to request that the time and place of the Conference may be communicated as soon as possible.

I am, &c.
(Signed) C. I. THOMAS.

[32181]

No. 4.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 26.)

Sir,

India Office, September 25, 1907.

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to inclose, for the consideration of Secretary Sir E. Grey, a copy of a letter from the Government of India dated the 5th September, 1907, as to the measures which should be taken in consequence of the conduct of the Sheikh of Koweit in taking part in an expedition organized by the Sheikh of Mohammerah against his rebellious tribesmen.

Mr. Morley would be glad to learn the views of Sir E. Grey regarding the alternative proposals made in paragraphs 5 and 6 of this letter. He is, however, disposed to think that it would be better to avoid taking any immediate action to give effect to either of them, having regard to the negotiations for the purchase of land at Koweit and the expediency of proceeding slowly in the gradual establishment of our position and relations with the Sheikh.

I am, &c.
(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

Inclosure 1 in No. 4.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Secret.)

Sir,

India, September 5, 1907.

WE have the honour to forward herewith copies of correspondence regarding the conduct of the Sheikh of Koweit in taking part in an expedition organized by the Sheikh of Mohammerah against his rebellious tribesmen.

2. It appears that Sheikh Khazal of Mohammerah found himself obliged to take strong measures, in his capacity as Persian Governor of the Mohammerah district, in order to compel the tribesmen of the Beni Truf to pay their revenue. Sheikh Mubarak, about the middle of June, proceeded to Mohammerah in his steam-yacht for the purpose of supporting his friend. He took with him a large quantity of small arms and ammunition, water-skins, and other articles which he handed over to Sheikh Khazal, and he subsequently sent his vessel back for a second consignment. He also arranged, at Sheikh Khazal's request, to garrison the Mohammerah outpost of Kasbeh temporarily with some of his own men, so as to free the Arab garrison for service with the field force. The operations resulted in the surrender of the Beni Truf. Although the operations in which Sheikh Khazal was engaged are described merely as the reduction to order of a rebellious tribe the Beni Truf, we have reason to believe from a note by Colonel Burton, when acting as Consul at Mohammerah in 1904, that the Sheikh has contemplated the reduction of this tribe for some time, with the object of extending

his unquestioned territorial authority to Hawizeh,* on the Turkish frontier; so that the proceedings have probably more than a temporary and local significance and may form part of a scheme for consolidating the Arab power in these regions under a central head.

3. We consider that by conveying arms and ammunition up the Shatt-el-Arab in his private yacht without the authority or permission of the Persian Government the Sheikh ran the risk of involving himself in serious difficulties with that Government or with the Turkish authorities, in either of which cases diplomatic complications affecting His Majesty's Government might have arisen. The Persian Government might reasonably imagine that the prompt assistance rendered by Mubarak to Sheikh Khazal would encourage the latter to assert his independence, should he find a convenient opportunity for doing so, while the Porte might regard the incident as an indication of Mubarak's growing disregard of Turkish suzerainty, and he might even have been arrested as a pirate for plying in Turkish waters with an armed vessel. We understand that the Minister at Tehran has received intimation that the Russians suspect the British authorities of having organized an alliance between the Sheikh of Mohammerah and Koweit with a view to the independence of the former, and it is also reported from Mohammerah that the Persian Government is suspicious of the friendship between the two Sheikhs. Your attention is invited in this connection to the despatch of the 19th July, 1906, from Sir C. Spring-Rice to Sir E. Grey, which we have received since the preceding remarks were written.

4. The possibility of a coalition between these Sheikhs who occupy the territory dominating the head of the Gulf had not escaped our attention, and in connection with this incident we venture to invite a reference to the apprehensions which we expressed in our telegram dated the 8th October, 1906, to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, as to the possible formation of a confederacy of Arab Sheikhs led by Sheikh Mubarak and the Sheikh of Mohammerah in order to secure their independence of foreign dominion. The attitude assumed by Sheikh Mubarak appears to favour the supposition that he is at all events desirous of drawing closer the bonds between himself and Sheikh Khazal, even to the extent of furnishing armed assistance to the latter in Persian territory, so that the matter will have to be closely watched in future.

5. As you are aware, the Agreement† concluded with the Sheikh of Koweit on the 23rd January, 1899, contains no stipulation as to the conduct of the Sheikh's external relations by the British Government, but merely provides that the Sheikh shall not, without the previous sanction of the British Government, receive the Representative of any foreign Power at Koweit, or give for occupation or any other purpose any portion of his territory to the Government or subjects of any other Power. For as long as these stipulations are observed the good offices of the British Government were promised under the Agreement to the Sheikh. This formal Agreement has, however, since been modified by the messages conveyed to the Sheikh in compliance with Lord George Hamilton's telegram of the 27th September, 1901, in connection with the differences between the Sheikh of Koweit and the Amir of Nejd, and the Honourable St. John Brodrick's telegram of the 3rd February, 1904, when a conflict was feared between the Sheikh, in combination with Sadun Pasha, and certain Arab tribes under Turkish protection. On both these occasions the Sheikh of Koweit was informed that His Majesty's Government would use their good offices on his behalf only if he refrained from aggression and was guided by their advice; and His Majesty's Government recently contemplated‡ conveying a similar message to the Sheikh, in order to prevent him from making reprisals on the Ajman tribe. It may, in consequence, be held to be the settled policy of the British Government that the external relations of Koweit should be in their hands. But we consider that our position in Koweit vis-à-vis other Powers would be greatly strengthened if this principle of policy could now be embodied in a formal Agreement; and advantage might perhaps be taken of Sheikh Khazal's recent warlike expedition in Mohammerah and of the negotiations now in progress for the purchase of the Koweit foreshore to add the requisite clause to the Agreement to be executed, in which Sheikh Mubarak is apparently anxious to repeat his pledges as to the exclusion of all foreign interests in Koweit other than the British. It might be necessary, in order to secure the Sheikh's consent to this addition, to increase, by way of a subsidy, the annual

* From the Gulf to Hawizeh the mediating Commissioners in 1850 laid down a line of frontier.

† Vide Inclosure 4.

‡ Vide Inclosure 2.

§ Vide correspondence forwarded with Foreign Secretary's letters dated October 11 and November 2, 1906.

¶ Vide our Secret despatch dated February 23, 1899.

‡ Vide correspondence ending with your telegram dated July 15, 1907.

payment of 60,000 rupees for which the Sheikh has asked* as rent for the foreshore; but we should of course attempt to obtain his consent without the promise of any increased payment. Our Political Agent may also be able to utilize this recent adventure of Sheikh Mubarak as a lever to induce him to give us the reservations required on reasonable terms. We now have the honour to request your sanction to the foregoing proposal; and, if it commends itself to His Majesty's Government, we would ask that your views may be communicated to us by telegraph, since the Sheikh has stated that his offer regarding the foreshore will only remain open for two months with effect, as we understand, from the 1st August; and it would be convenient that the negotiations regarding the proposed addition to the Agreement should be conducted simultaneously with those regarding the foreshore.

6. If His Majesty's Government do not approve of this proposal we consider that the Sheikh should be informed that the Government of India take strong exception to the share taken by him in the recent expedition in Arabistan, and that, unless he seeks and is guided by our advice in such matters, we shall not be able to exercise our good offices on his behalf.

We have, &c.
(Signed) MINTO.
KITCHENER.
H. ERLE RICHARDS.
E. N. BAKER.
C. H. SCOTT.
H. ADAMSON.
J. F. FINLAY.
J. O. MILLER.

Inlosure 2 in No. 4.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, July 28, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of a communication which I have received from the Political Agent at Koweit on the subject of Sheikh Mubarak's recent visit to Mohammerah.

2. On receipt, before I left Bushire, of the demi-official communication mentioned in paragraph 3 thereof, I let Major Knox know informally that I did not propose to take any action until I had received further and parallel illumination on the subject from His Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah.

Up to the time I left for Shiraz on the 26th June Mr. McDouall's reports did not give me the impression that any deterrent action on my part was either necessary or useful, nor indeed was any possible, as I was not in any case in a position to communicate quickly or satisfactorily with Sheikh Mubarak in time for my advice to be of use. Major Knox's letter now inclosed arrived after I had left Bushire and followed me to Shiraz, where, on arrival, I ascertained by telegraph from Bushire that the Sheikh of Mohammerah's operations had terminated, that he had effectively brought the Beni Truf to heel, and that Sheikh Mubarak had returned to Koweit.

Under these circumstances we can afford to examine the several aspects of the incident with deliberation.

3. Stated briefly the position was as follows:—

Sheikh Khazal, in his official capacity of Governor, on behalf of the Persian Government, of the Mohammerah district and appanages, having for a long time past had difficulties with the Beni Truf, owing to non-payment of revenue by them, ultimately found himself obliged to take the field against them. Sheikh Mubarak, learning that his fast friend was having an anxious time, and also prompted no doubt by the consideration that were Sheikh Khazal defeated his own security for large sums of money lent to him would be greatly prejudiced, proceeded to Mohammerah in his steam-yacht to support his ally with his presence and counsel. He took with him at the same time (and sent his vessel back for a second consignment) a large quantity of small arms and ammunition, water-skins, and other articles likely to prove useful to his ally. He also arranged at Sheikh Khazal's request to place some of his own men

* Vide our telegram dated August 28, 1907.

temporarily to garrison the Mohammerrah outpost of Khasbeh, opposite Mohammerah, in order to free its present Arab garrison for service with Sheikh Khazal's field force.

4. Looking at the picture from the most favourable point of view, we see Sheikh Mubarak rendering prompt and yeoman service to his friend the Persian Governor of Mohammerah, with a result greatly to the benefit of the Persian Administration and of law and order in Arabistan, as well as to the enhancement of the prestige of their Representative. If the Persian Government take exception to Sheikh Khazal receiving help from Sheikh Mubarak, it is presumably open to them to display such signs of their displeasure to Sheikh Khazal as will deter him from accepting such assistance again. Or, if they feel so inclined, which is unlikely, they might move us to use our influence with Mubarak to discourage such action on his part in future.

The unfavourable aspects of the incident are that Sheikh Mubarak used his steam-yacht to convey arms and ammunition up the Shatt-el-Arab, a course which is open to exception from an international point of view, and which may possibly imbue the Persian Government with the apprehension that he might at any time take the same measures to assist the Sheikh of Mohammerah in asserting his independence. His action may even give foreign Governments a handle for the charge that we are directly encouraging the two Sheikhs in this direction. In fact this charge has already been made by the Russian Legation, as will be seen from the two telegrams cited, which passed after I left Bushire.

5. Regarding the matter from the standpoint of the Political Agent at Koweit, I quite understand Major Knox feeling hurt at Sheikh Mubarak's neglect to consult him or to give him his confidence. On the other hand, putting myself in Sheikh Mubarak's shoes, I cannot ignore the fact that any help which was to be given to Sheikh Khazal must be given promptly if at all, and that he has sufficient experience of our deliberate methods to know well enough that by the time he could receive a reply to any reference made to us the crisis would long since have passed, and Sheikh Khazal would have been defeated or would have won without his help.

On the whole, and unless the position becomes modified by further diplomatic action on the part of Persia, Turkey, or Russia (to which we seem to have a fairly practical answer), I cannot think that Sheikh Mubarak's escapade, if it be one, calls for the drastic notice advocated by Major Knox, namely—

- (1.) A sharp remonstrance accompanied by force; or
- (2.) The withdrawal of our Representative from Koweit.

I am rather inclined to consider that the case will be met by my informing Sheikh Mubarak, on behalf of Government, if necessary, that we quite sympathize with him in his desire to prove a friend in need to his ally Sheikh Khazal, but feel called upon to make it plain to him that by conveying arms and ammunition up the Shatt-el-Arab in his private yacht without the authority or permission of the Persian Government he ran great risk of placing himself in serious difficulties with that Government or the Porte, from which we should have found great difficulty in assisting him to extricate himself.

I have not got with me the text of our Secret Agreement with Sheikh Mubarak, but if his action could be quoted as being inconsistent with that part of the document dealing with his relations with foreign Powers so much the better.

6. While expressing these views, I quite realize that it would be possible to regard this interesting incident in quite a different light from that in which it presents itself to me; and I can do no more than commit the circumstances to the wiser and more detached examination of Government.

I have not forwarded a copy of this communication to His Majesty's Minister, Tehran.

Inlosure 3 in No. 4.

Major Knox to Major Cox.

Koweit, June 22, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to inform you of further details with reference to the return of Sheikh Mubarak's steam-launch to this port on Wednesday last. The vessel arrived about noon of the 19th with only Ali-bin-Khalifa and Soliman-bin-Hamud aboard of her.

2. The interval between noon and sunset was busily employed in loading her up with small arms and ammunition. This was all carried on, without the smallest attempt

at concealment, in broad daylight, and it is estimated that at least 2,000 rifles and a proportionate quantity of ammunition were put on board of her.

3. I have already reported demi-officially that 1,500 rifles are said to have gone with her on her first voyage. I have also reported that Sheikh Jabir-bin-Mo'alla of the Nasser of Gashah left for up-river. I only learnt the next morning that he left in Sheikh Mubarak's launch.

4. The reason for these extraordinary proceedings is variously reported, and and probably erroneously as to detail, though fairly correct in the main.

5. The two undisputed assertions are—

(a.) That Sheikh Mubarak has lent Sheikh Khazal a very large sum of money on this year's date crop;

(b.) That Sheikh Mubarak wants to make sure of repayment, as Sheikh Khazal's affairs are in a bad way.

6. One report goes that Sheikh Khazal is dead and that there is trouble about the inheritance, and that Sheikh Mubarak wishes to secure the heir who he thinks will look after his interests.

The other version is that Sheikh Khazal's tribes have risen against him, and Mubarak is sending him assistance.

7. Those who support the first rumour state that the reason for Jabir-bin-Mo'alla's return is that Sheikh Mubarak proposes to instal him again as Sheikh of Gashah, and will support him in that position provided he secures Mubarak in the enjoyment of this year's date crop.

8. Whichever version is correct, the facts seem enough to warrant very serious apprehension. Sheikh Mubarak is openly using a large vessel (his private property) to import large quantities of arms into either Persian or Turkish territory, and it appears to me that the authorities of either country might try and effect his arrest on this account alone and we should have nothing to say in his defence. Indeed, one rumour of his capture by the Turkish authorities at Buzorah has already reached me, though I am inclined to treat it as a wild flight of the imagination.

9. Compared with this escapade, the interference in the affairs of Central Arabia would appear mere child's play.

10. With much hesitation in dealing with matters of such grave import, I venture to suggest that only two courses are open to us—

(a.) To administer a sharp remonstrance to Sheikh Mubarak, supporting it with such a show of force as will make it evident to him that we are his masters as well as protectors and mean to be so, and insist on the scrupulous fulfilment, so far as is now possible, of all the various promises that he has made and broken. An important point would be the deportation of three or four of the principal importers of arms. It does not seem to me that there would be any serious local opposition, even if the inhabitants were capable of such opposition, for Sheikh Mubarak's rule is unpopular, and the Kuwait people say openly that all the money he has sent to Sheikh Khazal has been wrung out of them by new and unheard-of taxes. I fully believe that the Sheikh realizes that the Turks will never forgive him, and that the Germans have so thrown in their lot in with the Turks that they cannot deal with him sincerely if they would. His only hope is in our support, which has made him what he now is—the richest and most powerful Sheikh that Kuwait has ever seen. He would, in my opinion, submit to whatever terms we chose to compel him to, if he were once convinced that we were in earnest.

(b.) If it is decided that such drastic action is impossible in present circumstances, it would be well to withdraw our Representative, for Sheikh Mubarak's high-handed actions are bound to involve us in serious trouble before long, and he listens to no remonstrances.

Inclosure 4 in No. 4.

Sir C. Spring-Rice to Major Cox.

(Telegraphic.)

Tehran, June 30, 1907.

We are accused by the Russians of organizing an alliance between the Sheikhs of Mohammerah and Kuwait with a view to the independence of the former.

Wicked man! Please let me have your observations by telegraph.

Inclosure 5 in No. 4.

First Assistant Resident to Sir C. Spring-Rice.

(Telegraphic.)

Bushire, July 3, 1907.

PLEASE refer to your telegram No. 104.

The Resident, who is on his way to Shiraz, is out of telegraphic touch. Sheikh Mubarak frequently visits Mohammerah without informing the Political Agent before-hand, and did so on this occasion. There is nothing unusual in the punitive expedition of the Sheikh of Mohammerah against the Buni Truf, as it is a frequent occurrence for this tribe to be in revolt. The accusation made by the Russians is of course entirely without foundation.

[32284]

No. 5.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 27.)

Sir,

India Office, September 26, 1907.

IN continuation of my letter of the 25th instant regarding the proposed purchase of land near Kuwait, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to forward a copy of a telegram from the Government of India, dated the 24th instant, in which it is suggested that a proviso should be added to the Sheikh's proposals regarding customs, to the effect that he will agree to treat British subjects always on the same footing, and customs rates, as Kuwaitis.

Mr. Morley would be glad to learn if this suggestion is concurred in by Sir Edward Grey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

Simla, September 24, 1907.

OUR telegram of the 8th September: Kuwait foreshore.

With reference to the concluding portion of our telegram of the 28th August. After further consideration of Sheikh's proposals regarding customs, we consider them unobjectionable, provided that Sheikh agrees to treat British subjects always on the same footing, and customs rates, as Kuwaitis. This seems necessary to prevent possible collusion between Kuwaitis and foreigners, if rates were hereafter lowered in favour of former.

(Addressed to Secretary of State and repeated to Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.)

[32284]

No. 6.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 27, 1907.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 25th and 26th instant, inclosing the draft Agreement and copies of a draft telegram to and of a telegram from the Viceroy respecting the proposed lease of a portion of the foreshore at Bunder Shweikh, near Kuwait.

With regard to the draft Agreement, I am to state, for the information of Mr. Secretary Morley, that, in the opinion of Sir E. Grey, it would be desirable to state explicitly that His Majesty's Government reserve the option to determine the lease at any time. This appears to be provided for by clause 3 of the draft Agreement; but if, without endangering the success of the negotiations, it could be made more explicit, such a precaution might prove expedient.

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Sir E. Grey considers that the wording of clause 5, which would practically seem to confirm the Agreement of 1899, is particularly well chosen, and the sentence which runs "any of our land within Kuwait boundaries or around it" appears to be so comprehensive as to render unnecessary the substitution of a fresh clause in place of clause 6, as suggested in the draft telegram to the Viceroy which forms the inclosure in your letter of the 25th September.

Sir E. Grey is, however, strongly of opinion that the words printed in italics in clause 8 should be omitted, as they might be construed in such a manner as to enable the Sheikh to elude his engagement not to sell or cede land without the consent of His Majesty's Government.

I am to add that Sir E. Grey concurs in the proposed alteration in Captain Knox's draft note of acceptance, and in the suggestion of the Government of India that a proviso should be added to the Sheikh's proposals regarding customs, to the effect that he will agree to treat British subjects always on the same footing as Koweitis.

It seems desirable that absolute secrecy should be maintained as to the Agreement, and that Sheikh Mubarak should pledge himself to this course, while the Political Agent at Kuwait should take no steps for the present to mark out the ground.

In view of the assent of the Treasury to allow half the cost of the lease to be borne by Imperial funds, and to the payment of a sum of 1,600*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* towards the purchase of a launch for Captain Knox, I am to suggest that, if the above observations meet with the concurrence of Mr. Morley, the Government of India should be authorized forthwith to conclude the Agreement with the Sheikh of Kuwait on the basis proposed.

A copy of the letter from the Treasury is inclosed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[32181]

No. 7.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 28, 1907.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th instant, inclosing a copy of a letter from the Government of India respecting the measures which should be taken in consequence of the conduct of the Sheikh of Kuwait in taking part in an expedition organized by the Sheikh of Mohammerah against his rebellious tribesmen.

I am to state, in reply, that Sir E. Grey entirely concurs in the opinion of Mr. Secretary Morley as to the inadvisability of acting on either of the alternative proposals made in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the letter from the Government of India.

On the conclusion of the negotiations with the Sheikh of Kuwait for the purchase of a strip of the foreshore at Bunder Shweikh, it would, however, in Sir E. Grey's opinion, be matter for consideration whether the warnings given to Sheikh Mubarak in 1901 and 1904 should not be repeated.

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

No. 8.

Report of the Inter-Departmental Conference on the Bagdad Railway Terminus to
Sir Edward Grey.

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 2, 1907.

WE have carefully considered, in accordance with your instructions, the various ports on the Persian Gulf, not in Persian territory, which would be suitable for the terminus of the Bagdad Railway. They are three in number, namely, Bunder Shweikh (near Kuwait), Warba Roads, including Um Karr, and Bussorah.

Bunder Shweikh.

We are unanimously of opinion that, from topographical and hydrographical considerations, Bunder Shweikh, which occupies a position south-west of Kuwait, would undoubtedly be the best site, since—

(a.) A wharf about 1 mile in length, or a series of smaller wharves of that length, could be constructed, with depths of not less than 25 feet alongside at low water.

(b.) A judicious arrangement of beacons would enable a vessel to use a channel to this wharf of a depth of not less than 14 feet of water at low-water springs, of 21 feet at high-water neaps, and 24 feet at high-water springs.

(c.) It would not be difficult to increase the depth of this channel to 20 feet at low-water springs, or 27 feet at high-water neaps, and 30 feet at high-water springs, and it is possible that even greater depth could be obtained at some cost.

(d.) The berths alongside the wharf would be perfectly secure at all times, and would be open to the breeze, which would prevent the stifling heat so prevalent at times on the littoral of the Persian Gulf.

(e.) A railway could be constructed to run down to the wharf, and passengers or goods be embarked or disembarked without delay.

The above advantages are important, as the whole tendency of traffic in the present day is to bring vessels to wharves or into floating docks, with railway communication alongside, so that transshipment to small vessels, lighters, or boats is avoided.

The question of the expense of fitting a terminal port for traffic is small in comparison with the expense of a railway, and the advantage of a railway is greatly reduced if a convenient terminal port cannot be constructed. Such a convenient terminal port could be made at Bunder Shweikh at probably very much less cost than at any other place.

Warba Roads, including Um Karr.

Next in order of convenience, Warba Roads has most advantages; but, owing to the longer distance from the open sea and to the necessity of buoying and lighting the channel, the facilities are not so great as at Bunder Shweikh. Moreover, the Island of Warba and the adjacent coast near Um Karr is for a large portion of the year practically uninhabited. In these circumstances, it would be difficult to insure protection against Arab raids—a danger which would not exist at Kuwait, where the conditions for defence against land attacks are more favourable.

Um Karr, a small creek on the Khor Zobeir, might possibly be made useful as a terminus, either in itself or in conjunction with Warba Roads. It is somewhat more inaccessible than Warba Roads, and the facilities for constructing a wharf are limited, since at most the accommodation would only suffice for berthing three vessels at a time, as against six at Bunder Shweikh.

Bussorah.

We consider that, despite its commercial importance, the promoters of the railway will not adopt Bussorah as a terminus, except in the last resort, because the cost of maintaining a sufficient depth to enable ocean-going steamers to cross the bar of the Shatt-el-Arab (which is 10 miles in length) at all times of tide, would undoubtedly be considerable. It would be possible to avoid this difficulty by cutting a ship canal from the vicinity of Bussorah to the Khor Zobeir (a continuation of the Khor Um Karr and the Khor Abdulla); but the time occupied in navigating the canal, and then the channel to the open sea, would be a drawback, in so far as passenger traffic and the carriage of mails are concerned.

Two other places have been suggested as possible terminal ports, namely, Fao and Ras Kathama, at the head of Kuwait Bay.

Fao.

Except for greater proximity to the sea, Fao, which lies inside the bar of the Shatt-el-Arab, has all the disadvantages and none of the commercial advantages of Bussorah.

Ras Kathama.

The depth of 20 feet at low water is about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile or upwards from the shore. It would therefore be necessary to run out a pier at considerable expense. The construction of wharves would be much more costly than at Bunder Shweikh.

Under these circumstances we strongly recommend that the strip of foreshore at Bander Shweikh should be acquired as proposed, since (a) it would undoubtedly be an asset in negotiations for British participation in the railway; and (b) even if these negotiations were to prove abortive, it would be expedient to consolidate our position at Kuwait, in order to counterbalance the prejudicial effects of any German port which may possibly be constructed in the neighbourhood at some future time.

But, while we hold that the leasing of land at Bander Shweikh is a step in the right direction, we do not consider that the possession of this harbour alone by Great Britain would exclude the Germans from access to the Persian Gulf. It would no doubt render our co-operation in the railway more desirable, but it would not make it indispensable.

The position of this country would indeed be incalculably stronger if His Majesty's Government were to secure rights of pre-emption or priority of lease in regard to Warba Island and Bubiyan Island, since both command the approaches to the Khor Abdulla and Khor Um Kasr, as also the commodious anchorage on the south of Warba Island. We entirely concur in the view expressed by the Government of India in their letter of the 4th February, 1904, namely, that—

"With the shores of the mainland and of Bubiyan Island in the possession of a single Power, the anchorage below Um Kasr and at Warba Island can at any time be converted into an impregnable harbour, and even if the day is still distant when the banks of the Khor Abdulla are likely to be armed with foreign forts or batteries, the undivided occupation by a German Railway Company of a potentially invulnerable position is not calculated to conduce to the enhancement either of British commercial prosperity or of British political prestige."

We therefore recommend, if diplomatic considerations permit, that the Sheikh of Kuwait should be invited to specify the nature of his claims to Warba Island, to which he is understood frequently to have referred; and that the continued occupation of Bubiyan Island by a Turkish post, in derogation of the Sheikh's territorial claims (which have been recognized and supported by His Majesty's Government), should be neutralized by the establishment forthwith of a Kuwaiti post, with the countenance of His Majesty's Government, on Warba Island, or, if that should prove undesirable, on the northern shore of Bubiyan Island. If practicable, we would even recommend the establishment of posts on both islands.

We desire to emphasize the importance which we attach to the effective assertion of the Sheikh's territorial claims to Bubiyan.

We wish to record our conviction that, once the railway has been constructed, the economic penetration under German influence will be so formidable as in the course of time seriously to undermine our position—political, commercial, and strategic—in the Persian Gulf. The recent institution of a line of subsidized steamships plying between Hamburg and the Gulf already marks the interest of Germany in those regions. We would therefore venture to express the conclusion that every effort should be made to insure a fair measure of British control over the terminus of the Bagdad Railway.

We do not, however, feel confident that we possess the means absolutely to debar Germany from acquiring an outlet on the Gulf; and this outlet, though at first commercial, might eventually be transformed into a strategic base, but by steps so gradual and clandestine as to render protests difficult or impracticable. In these circumstances we cannot but express the opinion that it is in the highest degree desirable to come to terms with the promoters of the Railway.

Finally, we would advocate that all steps which His Majesty's Government may consider feasible should be taken to consolidate the advantages we already possess at the entrance to the Persian Gulf, notably at Musandim Peninsula (where the harbour accommodation and water supply are adequate) and at the Islands of Kishm and Henjam.

A chart of Kuwait and the Shatt-el-Arab is annexed to this report.

We have, &c.

(Signed)

HERBERT KING-HALL.
J. E. FERARD.
T. H. TIZARD.
R. O. TEMPLE.
ALWYN PARKER.

[33052]

No. 9.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 4.)

Sir,

India Office, October 3, 1907.

WITH reference to your letter of the 28th ultimo as to the action to be taken in respect of the conduct of the Sheikh of Kuwait in taking part in affairs at Mohammerah, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to inclose a copy of a telegram from the Government of India, dated the 26th ultimo, reporting the desire of the Sheikh to intervene in the feud between Bin Saood and Bin Rashid in a manner which, as the Government of India point out, would involve him in definite political action in Central Arabia.

Mr. Morley, subject to Sir E. Grey's concurrence, would approve the instructions sent by the Government of India to the Political Agent at Kuwait on the 25th ultimo, but, as regards the answer to be made to the Sheikh in the event of his pressing for a definite reply, Mr. Morley considers that the message proposed is liable to be construed as an approval on our part of the Sheikh's interference in Nejd affairs, and that it would be best to confine the reply to a warning against any such interference.

I am, &c.

(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

Simla, September 26, 1907.

NEJD affairs. Following from Major Cox:—

1. Dated 17th September—

"Sheikh of Kuwait informed Political Agent on the 3rd September that he proposed to send a messenger to keep the peace between Bin Saood and Bin Rashid by guaranteeing former in possession of his territory, latter in that of Hail, and independence of El Kasim against both, and to persuade Bedouins of both sides to abandon war.

"Political Agent replied he would report to Government, and reminded Sheikh of previous caution against interference by Kuwait in affairs of Central Arabia.

"He asks for instructions on question of addressing strong remonstrance at present delicate juncture.

"He anticipates, if war continues, probable occupation of El Kasim by Turks invoked by Bin Rashid, and considers that efficacy of Mubarak's intervention will depend on attitude of Umtair tribe.

"Please see Residency diary, paragraphs 1787 to 1795."

2. Dated 18th September—

"Please see Bushire telegram of yesterday regarding developments in Central Arabia. Pending the completion of current negotiations for acquisition of foreshore, any forcible remonstrance is to be deprecated. We might, however, reply that, while we sympathize with Mubarak's desire for cessation of hostilities in the interior in the interests of his own port, we greatly question the wisdom of his fettering himself by a course which would inevitably prove a very serious burden, and that we can only adhere to view already expressed to the effect that the wisest policy for him is one of total aloofness."

Following reply sent on the 26th September:—

"Your telegrams of the 17th and 18th instant. Nejd affairs.

"It is most important, if possible, to induce Sheikh to postpone consideration of the policy proposed by him with regard to Bin Saood and Bin Rashid pending conclusion of negotiations regarding the foreshore. If Sheikh presses matter, Knox should say that the question is a very important one which must be referred to the Government of India, and that in meantime he can only refer Sheikh to warning previously given against interference in the affairs of Nejd. With regard to Sheikh's proposal to guarantee independence of El Kasim, Knox should remind him that Turks have not abandoned their claim to that district."

We consider it important, pending negotiations regarding the foreshore, to avoid danger of irritating Sheikh against us by any preemptory veto of policy proposed by him; but if Sheikh presses for immediate decision, we would suggest that Knox be instructed to inform him that we have no wish to prevent him from using his influence with Bin Saoud and Bin Rashid to prevent internecine warfare, which threatens prosperity of Sheikh's own country and trade, but that proposed guarantees would involve him in definite political action in Central Arabia, and cannot be allowed. We venture to think that situation emphasizes desirability of obtaining from Sheikh formal recognition of our right to control his external relations (*vide* our despatch dated the 5th September).

[33053]

No. 10.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 4.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 29th September, and to the Viceroy, dated the 2nd October, relative to the proposed purchase of a portion of the Koweit foreshore.

India Office, October 4, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 10.

Government of India to Mr. Morley

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic)

KOWEIT foreshore: My telegram of 24th ultimo.

Knox now reports that Sheikh proposes to levy on goods of British merchants and on rate of 1 per cent. on their sale. In this connection, we venture to remind you that Sheikh's offer of lease of foreshore with, it is understood, only remain open till middle of October.

September 29, 1907

Inclosure 2 in No. 10.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic)

YOUR telegram 27th August, two telegrams of 5th September, and your telegram of 24th September: Koweit.

Treasury having now agreed to refund a moiety (2,000l.) of annual rent, Agreement with Sheikh for lease of rectangular plot at Bunder Shweikh for yearly rental of 80,000 rupees may now be concluded, as in clauses 1-5 of draft inclosed with Knox's letter 21st August. Condition in clause 3 as to payment of 80,000 rupees a year only as long as British Government desires the land is, however, so important that words should be added to that clause, if this is possible without endangering success of the negotiations, to the effect that His Majesty's Government reserve the option to determine lease at any time, and that the money would cease to be paid in the event of such option being exercised.

Proposal to acquire sites other than at Bunder Shweikh is being more fully investigated here in communication with Foreign Office and Admiralty, and questions of territorial jurisdiction, e.g., in case of Warba Island, appear to be involved. Foreign Office consider that wording in clause 3, viz., "any of our land within Koweit boundaries or around it," is useful, and should be retained, but that the words printed in italics in clause 3 should certainly be omitted.

I understand from your telegram 27th August that this has already been arranged, and with this omission clauses 6, 7, and 8 are accepted.

The passage in the last lines of Knox's draft of the Agreement should be abbreviated so as to read "the desire of the Government is that the terms and conditions agreed on between the Government and the Sheikh of Koweit may be perpetual."

Your views as expressed in your telegram 24th September as to customs, taxes, and

independence are approved by His Majesty's Government, including, as regards customs, addition of proviso mentioned in your telegram 24th September. Rate levied from British merchants and Koweitis will then be 4 per cent., as explained in your telegram 29th September.

Foreign Office desire that absolute secrecy should be maintained as to the Agreement, and that Sheikh should pledge himself as to this; also that Political Agent should take no steps at present to mark out the ground.

The Agreement should now be forthwith concluded, the matter being treated as separate from the proposals regarding Sheikh's external relations made in your letter dated 5th September, 1907, which is under consideration.

Treasury have now agreed to bear half cost of launch for Political Agent, Koweit. See my telegram 10th April last.

[32864]

No. 11.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Secret)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 7, 1907

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you, to be laid before Mr. Secretary Morley, the accompanying copies of the Report of the recent inter-Departmental Conference on the Bagdad Railway terminus.*

I am to convey to you Sir E. Grey's high appreciation of the assistance rendered by Mr. Ferard, the Delegate of your Department, in the preparation of this interesting and useful statement.

I am to request that Sir E. Grey may be furnished with Mr. Morley's views as to what action, if any, should be taken in pursuance of the recommendations contained on on p. 3 of the Report.†

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

33052]

No. 12

Foreign Office to India Office

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 9, 1907

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant respecting the desire of the Sheikh of Koweit to intervene in the negotiations between Bin Saoud and Bin Rashid.

I am to state, in reply, that Sir E. Grey concurs in Mr. Morley's proposal to apply the instructions sent by the Government of India to the Political Agent at Koweit on the 2nd September.

As regards the answer to be made to the Sheikh in the event of his pressing for a definite reply, I am to add that Sir E. Grey agrees that it would be best to confine the reply to a warning against any such interference, but that even this action had better be postponed until the Agreement respecting the acquisition of the site at Bunder Shweikh has been concluded.

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

[33763]

No. 13

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 11.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 5th October, relative to the relations of the Sheikh of Koweit with the Sheikh of Mohammerah.

India Office, October 10, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 13.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Secret.)
(Telegraphic.)

India Office, October 8, 1907

YOUR letter dated 5th September paragraphs 5 and 6. Koweit and Mohammerah
No action should be taken at present in direction of either proposal. On conclusion
of foreign negotiations will be matter for consideration whether warnings given to
Sheikh of Koweit in 1901 and 1904 should not be repeated.

[34083]

No. 14.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 14.)

Sir,

India Office, October 12, 1907.

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to in line for the consideration of
Secretary Sir E. Grey, a copy of a letter from the Government of India in the Foreign
Department, dated 12th September, 1907, on the subject of two acts of organized
piracy committed by Arabs residing at Dayr, on the Persian coast.

In the one case the crew of a Persian boat, consisting of six persons, were all
murdered, with the exception of one boy who escaped. In the other, the murdered
persons were the crew and passengers of a Koweit boat containing twenty-nine men.

The Government of India recommended that a strong representation should be made
to the Persian Government with a view to securing the capture and punishment of the
offenders and full pecuniary reparation for the sufferers in the Koweit case, and they
further suggest that the Persian Government should be informed that failing success
with the demands of His Majesty's Government within a stated time, suitable naval
action will be taken at Dayr. It is possible that such action might involve the entering
of Persian territorial waters and the landing of men upon the Persian coast.

It seems clear that effective action is required to prevent the repetition in the Persian
Gulf of such acts as these which have taken place, and Mr. Morley would be glad to
learn the views of Sir Edward Grey as to the propriety of the proposals of the Govern-
ment of India. The suggestion of the Sheikh of Koweit that he should employ an
armed dhow for the protection of his vessels is doubtless inadmissible.

I am, &c.

(Signed) COLIN G. CAMPBELL.

Inclosure 1 in No. 14.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Simla, September 12, 1907.

WE have the honour to forward herewith a copy of correspondence with the Political
Resident at Persian Gulf on the subject of two acts of serious and brutal piracy
committed by Arabs residing at Dayr a few miles on the coast of Persia about 100 miles
south of Bushire.

2. In November 1906 the pirates attacked a native boat belonging to the Persian
port of Shirah, between Keir Island and Tanah. They killed all the crew except one
boy, who escaped after being left for dead and seized the cargo, which was valued at
£6000. In January 1907 the pirates captured a Koweit boat sailing from
Bussorah to Koweit. After murdering the crew and passengers, who numbered twenty-
nine, they burnt the boat and a dhow, the crew were subsequently found
stranded on the island of Ainair.

3. The Political Resident made representations on the subject of the first piracy to
the Derya Begi, but as they produced no result he telegraphed to the Minister at
Tehran and requested him to take the matter up. At the same time he requested the
British Naval Officer in Persian Gulf to proceed to Dayr and capture the
pirates. The British Naval Officer, who was stationed at Caspian, sent all his available
force to Dayr and the pirates subsequently received it appears that on the very
day when the "Sphinx" called at Dayr the Chief of the pirates was in Dayr and was

Maying with the Khan of that place. On the 16th June, 1907, His Majesty's Minister
informed the Resident that he could hold out no hopes that useful action would be taken
by the Persian Government in the matter at present.

4. It is true that in the first place the victims were Persian subjects, and that it
might be supposed that the Persian Government would themselves like steps to secure
redress for their own subjects from the pirates residing within their jurisdiction. The
British Government have however, acknowledged a general obligation for the preservation
of the maritime peace of the Gulf, and it is their object to secure the suppression of
piracy in Gulf waters. It would therefore, in our opinion, be our duty, even if
British interests or the interests of British-protected persons were not primarily
concerned, to take all possible action with a view to scattering the Dayr gang. And in
the case of the second offence we consider that we are under a special obligation in this
instance, because some subjects of the Sheikh of Koweit to whom we are bound, under
the Agreement of the 23rd January, 1899, to extend our good offices have been killed
and murdered by the pirates.

5. We would accordingly venture to recommend that a strong representation
should be made to the Persian Government with a view to secure the capture and
punishment of the offenders and full pecuniary reparation for the sufferers in the Koweit
case. In view of the offence committed against their own subjects, the Persian Govern-
ment should presumably be only too ready to co-operate with us against the offenders.
But it appears that the Persian Government are likely either to secure satisfaction for the offenders which
have been committed or to prevent a recurrence of such crimes in the future, we would
suggest that the Persian Government should be informed that, failing compliance with
the demands of His Majesty's Government within a stated time, suitable naval action
will be taken at Dayr.

6. If our proposal is approved, it is quite possible that, in order to clear out the
pirates, it may be necessary for the naval authorities not only to enter Persian territorial
waters, but also to land men on the Persian coast. We are aware that the Persian Govern-
ment will not allow of such action being taken by British naval forces, and that a
strong protest will be made against the adoption of this course, but the Minister at Tehran was on that occasion directed
by His Majesty's Government to inform the Persian Government that the Commanders
of His Majesty's ships, whilst they would always be careful to respect the sovereign
rights of Persia, and to co-operate to the utmost of their ability with the local authorities,
must, in the absence of any effective Persian naval force, retain their freedom to take
at their discretion and on their responsibility, even within Persian territory, such measures
for the repression of piracy as the urgency or gravity of any particular case might seem
to them to warrant. The Persian Government were reminded that the security from
pirates enjoyed by the population both on the Persian and opposite Arab coasts was
entirely due to the past efforts of the British navy, and that they were in a position
to do so. The Government were also reminded of the special compacts on this subject with the Persian
Chiefs, and that they could not engage to give any new orders to the Commanders of
British ships which would interfere with the freedom of action of the British navy in maintaining
the maritime peace in the Gulf. It was also pointed out that the Persian Government's
demand was that the British navy should be in a position to suppress the piracy in the Gulf, and that the British navy
had given permission for His Majesty's steamships to search
merchant-vessels in Persian waters, and to confiscate any arms and ammunition intended
for Persian vessels which might be found on board.

In March 1904 the claim of the British Government to take measures even on
Persian territory for the suppression of piracy was once more enforced, when Sir N.
O'Connor reported to the Marquess of Lansdowne that a serious case of piracy on the
Shatt-el-Arab had been perpetrated on a British Indian sailing-vessel laden with dates.
He stated that His Majesty's Consul at Bussorah had reason to believe that the stolen
property was hidden in the pirates' huts at Abkatch, on the Khor Hindian Persian coast
of the Shatt-el-Arab, and suggested that the "Lapwing," then at Koweit, should be
instructed to search the place. Instructions were issued to the Commander of His
Majesty's ship "Lapwing," and a search was accordingly made in Persian territory, but
without success.

In view of these precedents His Majesty's Government would doubtless not be
disposed to consider any protest that the Persian Government might make regarding
action taken by us against the pirates, and naval action in an outlying part of Persian
territory on the Gulf, with the active assistance or consent of the Persian authorities,
ought not unduly to excite the susceptibilities of other Powers.

[904]

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9. The most cogent reason in favour of immediate action in the present case is to be found in the fact that the Sheikh of Kuwait has asked, with reference to the piracy committed on his subjects, that the Government of India will concur in his employing a heavily-armed dhow to protect his vessels plying between Kuwait or Bassorah and Persian ports.

We consider that this proposal should be negatived, since, if the Sheikh, with our consent and assistance, dispatched an armed dhow to patrol the Gulf, the Turks might regard it as a symptom of his growing independence, and they might complain of a disturbance of the *status quo*. Again, the Persian Government might consider the move to be a sinister one, especially having regard to the fact that Mubarak has recently rendered armed assistance to the Sheikh of Mohammerah. Finally the policing of the Persian Gulf by Mubarak would amount to an infringement of our prerogative, and therefore, in accordance with established policy, could not be allowed. But it is evident that if we were to forbid the Sheikh to take steps for the protection of his subjects, and were at the same time to take no effective steps ourselves, we should inevitably arouse his resentment. On the other hand, if we succeeded in securing reparation for the attack on Mubarak's subjects, this fact would afford an important demonstration of our will and power to protect his interests. We should thus, while continuing to exercise our authority to us, conclusively establish our claim to protect his subjects, whether in Persia or elsewhere. We trust, therefore, that the adoption of the measures proposed in paragraph 5 of this letter may be authorized.

We have, &c.

(Signed)

MINISTERS
KITCHENER
H. ERLE RICHARDS
E. N. BAKER
C. H. SCOTT
H. ADAMSON
J. P. FINLAY
J. O. MILLER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 14.

Excerpt from the Diary of the Persian Gulf Political Residency for the week ending December 10, 1906.

Langah

December 5, 1906.—The Residency Agent, Langah, has received a letter from Sheikh Abdulhadi bin-Muhammad Bushri, Chief of Taona, informing him of an act of piracy committed about the middle of November last on a Shivah boat by some Arabs temporarily residing either at Dayr, Kangoon, or Um-el-Kurm, but said to have been expelled from their homes by Sheikh Khazal of Mohammerah. The boat was attacked while she was between Kers Island and Taona, and the pirates severely wounded and threw overboard her crew, numbering six, took all the cargo, valued at 8,000 rupees, and left after scuttling the vessel. The incident came to light through one of the wounded crew who was carried ashore near Taona. The Darya Begi's attention has been directed to the matter.

Inclosure 3 in No. 14.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Telegram 1. PLEASE see my diary entry of the 6th December, 1906. In defiance of pressure from His Britannic Majesty's Minister, Tehran, and myself here, no serious action has been taken by Persian authorities, and the Fars and Bushire Governments continue to shift responsibility for maintenance of order in Dashti district from one to the other. Meanwhile another case of piracy with wholesale murder has just come to light, perpetrated some time ago on a Kuwait dhow and alleged on good grounds to have been committed by the same gang. In this connection Sheikh of Kuwait writes urging that

the authorities of Dashti should be called upon to hand the pirates over to justice, their habitat and identity being, he declares, notorious.

(Sent to the address of the Foreign Department; telegram repeated to His Britannic Majesty's Minister, Tehran.)

Inclosure 4 in No. 14.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, June 16, 1907.

(Telegraphic.)

PLEASE see my telegram of the 16th instant.

Sheikh Mubarak further asks that the Government of India will concur in his employing a heavily armed dhow to protect his dhows plying between Bassorah or Kuwait and Persian ports, and that no objections may be raised to his dealing direct with pirates, if any are encountered. Such a vessel must, to be of any use, operate, if necessary, in territorial waters and creeks, and in any case I think that it would be difficult to prevent it from doing so. But, apart from this, the Government of India will probably consider that the same objections exist as were held to exist with regard to a similar application which emanated from the Sheikh of Bahrain. If, however, we oppose Mubarak's proposal, we should obviously insist on the Persian Government taking adequate measures to suppress the gang and see that such measures are satisfactorily carried out.

I doubt the ability of the present Governor to take effective measures, and at present he does not admit that he has the jurisdiction to do so. If, however, he receives peremptory orders and the means to carry them out, I will endeavour to keep him up to the mark.

Repeated to Sir O. Spring-Rice

Inclosure 5 in No. 14.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, June 16, 1907.

(Telegraphic.)

I HAVE received the following telegram, dated the 16th June, from the Minister at Tehran, who requests me to repeat it to you:—

"Please see your telegrams Nos. 92 and 94. I can hold out no prospect of useful action on the part of the Persian Government against piratical gangs."

Inclosure 6 in No. 14.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, June 23, 1907.

(Confidential.)

IN continuation of my telegram dated the 16th June, 1907, I have the honour to forward copies of Major Knox's letter and accompaniment on which it was based.

A copy has not been forwarded to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

Inclosure 7 in No. 14.

Major Knox to Major Cox.

Kuwait, June 6, 1907.

(Confidential.)

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Sheikh Mubarak has presented me with a proposal to equip a boom for the pursuit of the sons of Hamar.

I informed the Sheikh that, while I appreciated his offer to co-operate in the suppression of these pests, it occurred to me that there might perhaps be difficulties to prevent their acceptance thereof, especially if the boom, to effect their object, had to enter Persian or Turkish ports, and that it would be advisable to consult the Resident before taking action. The Sheikh replied that he had not thought of entering ports, but proposed to effect the capture either in the open sea or to follow them to the Khor-i-Hindian, where he seemed to think there was a chance of the pirates taking refuge. He agreed that it was necessary

I enclose your first and asked him to be good enough to put his proposal in writing. That proposal I have now the honour to submit, and to request the favour of early instructions as to the reply to be given to the Sheikh.

Reference letter dated the 22nd May, 1907, from the Political Agent, Kuwait, to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

Inclosure 8 in No. 14.

Sheikh Mubarak-us-Sabah to Major Knox.

(Translator.)
(After compliments.)

22 Rubi-uth-thani, 1325 H

WE informed you that the boom of Ali-bin-Fathala, of our subjects the people of Kuwait, five months ago loaded up from Basorah date baskets and passengers of the people of Kuwait, both male and female, and left for Kuwait. The aforesaid boom was lost. It was conjectured that she had been wrecked by the winter gales. After sixty days news came that the boom had grounded on the Island of Amair, and her mast and yards still standing and they saw in her blood, and we sent the owner of the boom to the aforesaid boom, and he also saw in her much blood, and we did not know what had happened to them. After that, Nakhoda Abdulla, of the people of Kharij, informed us that, from the talk of the people of Dayr to him in Bahrain, the children of Hamaidi had taken away the boom, when at anchor at the buoy, and had killed all the people in her, and had taken all her property and the cargo in the boom and had abandoned her, so that she grounded at the Island of Amair. And the sons of Hamaidi are notorious; they are all dwelling in Dayr, and a source of profit to the Ruler of that place. We have sent Haji Abdulla, of Kharij, to you, and he has informed you verbally. We hope that you will acquaint the Resident of this occurrence.

And the sons of Hamaidi are pirates, well known and banished by Sheikh Khazal and the Basorah Government. It is incumbent on the Ruler of Dayr that he should seize these men and hand them over to the British Government. There will be loss to our subjects from such killing and plunder. Also, if the Government grant me permission, I will send a boom, and in her sufficient strength to protect our boats which go to Basorah and the ports of Fars. Then, if they see the aforesaid pirates, they will fight them. Without the orders of Government we can do nothing, and our subjects are in the protection of Government, and such a loss has befallen them, and we are sure that the pity of Government will not permit this, for our subjects are in the protection of Government. And may you remain safe and friendly.

(Sealed) Sheikh MUBARAK-US-SUBAH

True translation.

(Signed) S. G. Knox, Major,
Political Agent, Kuwait.

Kuwait, June 6, 1907.

Inclosure 9 in No. 14

Major Cox to Government of India

Bushire, June 2, 1907

IN amplification of my telegram dated the 16th June, 1907, I have the honour to submit, for the information of the Government of India, précis of the two cases of piracy referred to.

Duplicates are being forwarded to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran for information.

Précis of a Case of Piracy with Murder committed on a Persian Dhow off Taonah in November 1906, and subsequent correspondence.

A native vessel of the "mashoweh" type belonging to the Persian port of Shiroh, which had been in the "poor" of dry-dock of Lingah for some days, was ready for sea on the 16th November. She had on board six persons and cargo to the value of 6,000 rupces.

In the dry-dock alongside of her had been another "mashoweh" manned by some Arabs. It seems that these Arabs are well known as "bilashitis" (pirates), and are said

to belong to a party of bad characters which was expelled from the Shatt-el-Arab two years ago by the Sheikh of Muhammural on account of depredations committed there. They are variously stated to have been living for some time past at Dayr, Kangoon, and Um-el-Kurm, on the Dashti Coast. Their identity was probably not recognized at Lingah until after the occurrence. This Arab "mashoweh" got under way from Lingah on the night of the 16th September at the same time as the Shiroh craft, and it appears that on the night before the 1st Shawwal (i.e., night of the 17th November) the Arabs approached the Persian dhow on the pretence of asking for water, and, having boarded her, attacked and stabbed to death, as they thought, the six occupants, and transferred all the merchandize found in her to their own vessel. They then tied the wounded or murdered men to the anchor rope and threw them overboard with the anchor and bored a hole in the dhow, so that she got waterlogged and partially sank. The pirates then left, and it is not known where they went to. Of the six men thrown overboard, one, a boy of 16, who was not dead, got free from the ropes and was cast ashore between Charak and Taonah about noon on the 1st Shawwal (18th November), where he was found by some persons of Taonah and taken to the Chief of that place, Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Mahomed Bushri. He was nursed at Taonah until he was sufficiently recovered to be taken to Lingah to have his wounds tended. On the same afternoon that the boy was found an object was seen in the sea by the Taonah people, and boats proceeding to the spot found that it was the scuttled dhow with several holes in her.

The above was reported by the Residency Agent at Lingah on the 20th November, 1906. Later reports from the same source, obtained from one Abdul Rahim-bin-Mulla Abdullah, an inhabitant of Kangoon, have brought the following details to light:—

The occupants of the Shiroh dhow were as follows:

1. Ibrahim
2. Ali-bin-Ibrahim, son of above and sole survivor.
3. Mahmud-bin Abdul Ghafar, owner of the looted merchandize. A merchant of Gaobandi, for the Chief of which district he was also bringing some gold ornaments.
- 4 and 5. Names not known. Two of the crew
6. One ship's boy; taken prisoner by the pirates and murdered later.

The pirates, after sinking the dhow, made for a small port 2 miles east of Kangoon called Nakhil (Shiroh) where they landed the stolen goods. They then proceeded to and out of the coast of Lingah. From here they transported the latter by land to Kangoon. Ahmed Khan, uncle of Jamal Khan, of Dashti, the Deputy Governor of this place, appears to have been away at the time, but two of his relatives, who were acting for him, by name Mullah Hussein and Zayer Mirza, are alleged to have received a portion of the booty a short time ago. They are both of the family of the Deputy Governor of Dayr, who had come to know of the proceedings.

Jamal Khan, the Governor of Dashti, on learning of the matter, evidently appeared to have feared pursuit, as he gave directions for the pirates to be disguised as men of Dashti and taken to Lingah. For some time past it has been known that the pirates were to be seen in the neighbourhood of Lingah, and after landing the stolen goods, appears to have been taken to the Khori Bardistan, 2 miles east of Dayr.

As regards the pirates themselves, they appear to have been three in number, all brothers, though there is some divergence of opinion regarding their precise names.

1. According to Abdul Rahim-bin-Mulla Abdullah, originally an inhabitant of Kangoon, but now residing at Lingah, they were—

- (1.) Sheikh Abdulla.
- (2.) Sheikh Ibrahim.
- (3.) Sheikh Abdul Reza.

2. According to the Abyssinian slave of one Mohamed-bin-Subah, who knew them while at Lingah, their names were—

- (1.) Abdulla;
- (2.) Meloo;
- (3.) Abdul Reza.

and they were known as the family of Hamaidi and residents of Manyoohi.

3. When Captain Bowman, of His Majesty's ship "Sphinx," went to Dayir and Kongoon to make inquiries at the request of the Resident in January 1907,* the local authorities denied all knowledge of this particular piracy but declared that it was true that about four years ago some Bussorah Arabs had plundered a dhow belonging to Seyyid Saleh, of Mohammerah, and had then come to Dayir to sell the cargo, but that on the Sheikh of Mohammerah sending warning to Dayir about them their dhow and cargo had been seized and the Arabs expelled. Their names were said to be—

- (1.) Abdullah Ratha bin-Hamad
- (2.) Ibrahim bin-Hamad
- (3.) Isma'il bin-Hamad al-Amah (now a prisoner at Mohammerah)

It was further stated that after being expelled from Dayir they had sought refuge at Abu Thabi or Shargah.

In connection with this visit of His Majesty's ship "Sphinx," Mr Francis, retired Assistant Surgeon, one day stated, in conversation to a member of the Residency, that he was at Dayir the day the "Sphinx" called there, and that "the pirate" was actually staying with the Khan of that place at the time; that this fact was well known to every one, but that as he (Mr. Francis) was treating the Khan, he could not go out and give information on board.

Further corroboration from an independent source is furnished in a report from the Political Agent, Koweit, before whom one Muhammad bin-Haji Abdulla bin Muhammad, a nakhoda and inhabitant of the Island of Kharg, stated that the chief of the pirates was actually in "Dayir at the time the 'Sphinx' called."

Action taken by the Residency

On receiving the first report (dated the 25th November, 1906) of the piracy from the Residency Agent at Lingah, inquiries were made at once from the Darya Begi, the then Governor of the Gulf Ports, as to what steps he proposed to take in the matter. The Darya Begi replied (18th December, 1906) that Dayir was in Dashedi, under the Khan, and that Dashedi was in the jurisdiction of Fars, and that there was no way to see his way to taking any action. The Resident again communicated with the Darya Begi, but that he could not see how anything could be done, except by one by means of the Darya Begi. He was under his (the Governor's) control, and inquired whether it would assist in any way if he (the Resident) were to move the Legation to get the "Persian" deputed. The Darya Begi informed the Resident in reply (3rd January, 1907) that the "Persian" had been engaged by the Customs to prevent him from paying a visit to Lingah, and that he could not make use of the "Muzaffer" without orders from Tehran, as she was under the control of the Customs Director. On receipt of this the Resident telegraphed (6th January, 1907) to the Minister, informing him of the position of affairs, and requesting that the Persian Government be moved to direct the Governor to proceed to Dashedi in the "Muzaffer." At the same time (6th January, 1907) he requested the Senior Naval Officer (Captain Bowman), who happened to be at Bushire, to proceed to Dayir and make inquiries with a view to obtaining, if possible, further details regarding the piracy.

On the 16th February the Minister replied to the Resident's telegram informing him that it was stated by the Persian Government that the necessary orders had been sent. In the meantime, however, there had been a change of Governor. The Darya Begi having left Bushire on the 30th January, was succeeded by Haji Sa'ed-es-Sultaneh, and the latter, having been offered the Governorship of Dashedi by the Persian Government, and having accepted the same (18th February) the Persian Government, to whom a reference was made on the subject by His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz, repudiated jurisdiction and threw back responsibility on Bushire. The new Governor of the Gulf Ports, however, promised to take necessary action in the matter, though he at the same time denied having received any orders from Tehran in that connection. No action has up to date been taken by him, and the Resident now understands that the Sa'ed-es-Sultaneh has submitted his resignation of the Governorship of Dashedi, though this has not yet been accepted.

* It will be understood that His Majesty's ship "Sphinx" only went to the locality to make inquiries for the Resident's information.

On the 16th June, 1907, in reply to Resident's telegram of the 16th idem regarding another piracy committed apparently by the same gang on a Koweit dhow, His Majesty's Minister intimated that he could hold out no hopes that useful action would be taken by the Persian Government at present.

(Signed) P. Z. COX, Major,
Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

Bushire, June 23, 1907.

Brief Details of a Piracy committed on a Koweit Dhow.

A Koweit boom with a crew of four men, natives of Bussorah, and owned by Ali-bin-Hamad-ul-Fathala, originally of Bahrein, but domiciled (since forty years) in Koweit, left Koweit for Bussorah on the 24th December, 1906, leaving the latter place again on her return journey on the 4th January, 1907. She never returned, and was given up for lost.

According to the father of the Nakhoda, who helped to load up the boat at Bussorah, there were about twenty-five native passengers on board, amongst whom were—

1. The daughter of Ibrahim bin-Nugamish, wife of Ali bin-Nugamish,
2. Abdur Rahman bin-Shahab.

both well known in Koweit.

About the middle of March news was received that the boom had been seen derelict off the Island of Amair on the Arab coast near El Katif, but on inquiries being made there by the owner's son Hussein, he was informed that it had been salvaged and taken by the inhabitants of the island to Bahrein for sale.

Subsequently it transpired that the vessel had been recognized at Bahrein by friends of Ali bin-Fathala, and inquiries were made which led to Sheikh Esa giving orders for the boat to be returned to the original owner, whose son had now arrived at Bahrein with a letter from Sheikh Mubarak. The Amair people declared that they had found in the boom many blood marks, a severed human arm, and the remains of a man with his hands tied behind his back, and towed by the boom. The vessel, when found, was said to have been absolutely empty, containing not a sail or a cubit's length of rope. Its hull was, however, in perfectly seaworthy condition.

Haji Abdullah bin-Muhammad Arab, Nakhoda of Kharg Island, made a statement before the Political Agent, Koweit, on the 21st May to the effect that he had recently been sitting in a coffee-shop at Bahrein, when a Persian of Dayir, who was present and discussing these piracies, stated that the sons of Hamadi, the notorious pirates, were well known in his village. They had recently been absent for two or three months, and had then returned bringing dates and bracelets and gold-laced clothes of women.

The chief of them was one by name Abdulla bin-Hamadi, of Bussorah, and his sons—

1. Abdur Reza.
2. Name unknown.

Their crew consisted of—

1. Seyyid Mehdi of Ganawa (a well-known robber, once punished by the Headman of Bunder Itigt).
2. Six men of Dayir.

The man further stated that their head-quarters used to be Dayir, but that now they lurked in Khor Ziyarat, and had a house in Um-el-Kurran* and Jahrin Island.

On the 6th June Sheikh Mubarak wrote pressing for the punishment of these men, and offering to arm a dhow for the purpose. His proposal is under reference to Government.

(Signed) P. Z. COX, Major,
Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

Bushire, June 23, 1907.

* Latitude 28°

Inclosure 10 in No. 14.

Government of India to Major Cox.

(Telegraphic.)

Simla, July 23, 1907.

YOUR letter dated the 23rd June, 1907, regarding piracy on Koweit dhow.
Please report by telegraph whether a full pecuniary demand has been put in against the Persian Government for these piracies.

Inclosure 11 in No. 14.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.)

Shiraz, August 6, 1907.

PIRACY on Koweit dhow.
Please refer to your telegram dated the 25th July. His Majesty's Minister telegraphs, in reply to inquiry from me:—

"I have made representations about the piracy."

The representations have apparently been made quite recently, but in any case they will be devoid of result, in my opinion.

[34363]

No. 15.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 17.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 12th October, relative to Nejd affairs.

India Office, October 16, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 15.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

India Office, October 12, 1907.

YOUR telegram of 26th September: Nejd affairs.
Instructions sent to Major Cox 25th September are approved. In event of Sheikh of Koweit pressing for immediate decision, your reply should be confined to a warning against interference in the affairs of Nejd. It will be advisable, however, to postpone even this action until Agreement for acquiring site at Bunder Shweikh has been concluded.

[35203]

No. 16.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 24.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 24th October, relative to the signature with the Sheikh of Koweit of the Agreement as to the Koweit foreshore.

India Office, October 24, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 16.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic.)

Simla, October 24, 1907.

POLITICAL Agent at Koweit reports Agreement with Sheikh was signed on the 15th October.

[34083]

No. 17.

Foreign Office to India Office.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 29, 1907.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant, in which you transmit a copy of a despatch from the Government of India on the subject of two acts of organized piracy committed by Arabs residing at Dayir, on the Persian coast, and involving, in one case, the murder of the crew and passengers of a Koweiti boom, numbering twenty-nine in all.

I am to state, in reply, that Sir E. Grey concurs in the recommendation of the Government of India that strong representations should be made to the Persian Government with a view to securing the capture and punishment of the offenders and full pecuniary reparation for the sufferers in the Koweit case, and further that the Persian Government should be informed that, failing compliance with the demands of His Majesty's Government, suitable naval action will be taken at Dayir.

I am, however, to add that Sir E. Grey is not hopeful that the Persian Government will succeed, under present circumstances, in securing the punishment of the offenders, or indeed that they will easily be induced to pay compensation. He is accordingly of opinion that a vessel should be ordered to Dayir at once to watch the movements of the pirates in question, with the object if possible of effecting a capture at sea; and he further considers that the Commander should be authorized to land temporarily a sufficient force of men to capture the pirates and hand them over to the Persian authorities, if on arrival at Dayir he should hear that the pirates are in the neighbourhood. This action, as you are aware from the correspondence ending with Sir H. Walpole's letter of the 11th March, 1903, would be in accordance with precedent and practice.

On learning that these views meet with the concurrence of Mr. Secretary Morley, this Department would enter into the necessary communications with the Admiralty.

I am further to state that Sir E. Grey agrees that the Sheikh of Koweit should not be allowed to equip an armed dhow.

With regard to the incidental remark made in the final paragraph of the Government of India's despatch respecting the protection of Koweitis resident abroad, I am to inform you that, notwithstanding the subsequent correspondence on the subject, Sir E. Grey is disposed to adhere to the views expressed in Lord Lansdowne's despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, No. 246 of the 2nd September, 1903, of which a copy is inclosed for facility of reference.

I am, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

Inclosure in No. 17.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Connor.

(No. 246.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 2, 1903.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 486 of the 11th instant, reporting an application recently made to the Acting British Consul at Damascus to grant protection to some Arab merchants of Koweit, and requesting instructions as to the course which Mr. Monahan should be directed to pursue.

Your Excellency will find in the Confidential correspondence regarding Koweit, part 2, pp. 56, 57, an account of a similar question which arose in November 1900 in connection with the trial of a native of Koweit who was suspected of smuggling arms.

[904]

His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire was informed on that occasion that, as the district had never been placed under British protection, His Majesty's Government could not claim natives of Koweit as British-protected persons, nor would they be justifiable by British Consular Tribunals in Persia.

The same argument would appear to be applicable to the present case, and your Excellency should instruct Mr. Monahan to be careful to abstain from giving any formal promise of British protection. At the same time, there seems to be no objection to his holding out a hope that his good offices would be exercised unofficially on behalf of these merchants in the event of their experiencing any unjust treatment at the hands of the Turkish authorities.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSLOWNE.

[35882]

No. 18.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 30.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 19th September, relative to Koweit affairs.

India Office, October 29, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 18.

Major Knox to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Koweit, September 4, 1907.

AS directed in Foreign Department telegram dated the 15th August, 1907, have the honour to submit herewith a copy of a letter dated the 3rd September, 1907, to the address of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

2. I regret that I am unable to say exactly when the interview reported took place, but probably about the commencement of August last, and certainly not later than the 14th ultimo, when Sheikh Mubarak returned to Koweit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) S. G. KNOX.

Inclosure 2 in No. 18.

Major Knox to Major Cox.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Koweit, September 3, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to report that Sheikh Mubarak informed me at an interview during the past week that M. Wonckhaus, the German merchant at Bussorah, had visited him at Fuliya, in the Shatt-el-Arab.

2. He stated that he had merely come on an ordinary visit of courtesy, having heard much of Sheikh Mubarak-us-Sabah, and being interested in him and his fine town.

3. He also said that he did not know if Sheikh Mubarak was aware of the friendly interest and solicitude with which His Imperial Majesty the Sultan watched Sheikh Mubarak and his doings, and how His Majesty was continually sending messages to the local Turkish authorities to safeguard Sheikh Mubarak's interests in every way. To this the Sheikh appears to have made suitable acknowledgments.

4. Somehow or other, in spite of the courtesy visit, the talk insensibly drifted on to business matters. M. Wonckhaus began talking about his fine line of steamers, and expressed curiosity as to how and whence Koweit town drew its supplies. From Bombay, through the British India Company? M. Wonckhaus was astonished to hear it; Bombay was so far away.

5. Sheikh Mubarak then expatiated on the long and close connection of Koweit town with the English. The friendship between the two was over 200 years old, and, in spite of the distance from Bombay, quite a number of Koweit merchants had business houses there, and all had intimate relations. If M. Wonckhaus were to ask Mr. Lyle, the British India Company's Agent at Bussorah, he would learn that the British India Company looked upon the steamers visiting Koweit as Sheikh Mubarak's private property. They were at his beck and call. Extra steamers were sent up when required, and a steamer could be detained for a day or two if Sheikh Mubarak wished it. M. Wonckhaus here intimated that he and his Company would be found equally complaisant.

6. Sheikh Mubarak also informed M. Wonckhaus that at a critical juncture in his affairs the British Government had interfered to protect him, had landed soldiers who threw up entrenchments, and owing to their kindness and firmness the danger had passed away.

7. I venture to express the opinion that this intelligence, as communicated by Sheikh Mubarak, is not without significance in regard to my Confidential letter dated the 31st August. It was intended to show that Sheikh Mubarak remains faithful to his engagements in spite of tempting offers to seduce him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) S. G. KNOX.



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